

Although Less Common Now, Tetanus Still Dangerous Disease

By ROY O. GILBERT, M.D.,
Los Angeles County Health Officer

In these days of fast moving machines, when vehicle accidents are added to the other hazards that threaten life and limb, protection against tetanus becomes a more urgent matter than it was when civilization was less technologically advanced and the pace was slower.

Although tetanus is both a dreadful and unnecessary disease, 13 cases have been reported in Los Angeles County so far this year. And victims of this disorder have only about a 50-70 chance of recovery.

Tetanus is caused by the tetanus bacillus, a tiny germ that produces a nerve toxin when it grows in deep wounds. The toxin, which is given off by the bacteria during its reproductive process, affects the brain and spinal cord. The germ is "anaerobic" which means that it grows and thrives only in the absence of air.

Wound Dangerous
An injury need not be of a serious nature in order to permit the tetanus germ to get out of contact with the air. A puncture wound such as that made by a nail or a thorn, or a tear in the flesh that heals too rapidly will provide the environment necessary for the production of the tetanus toxin.

Tetanus bacilli normally exist in the intestines of vegetable eating animals and occasionally in man without causing any trouble whatsoever. It is only when the germs enter a puncture type wound, or when a wound seals itself and cuts off the air, that growth is promoted and the nerve toxin produced which causes the disease.

The germs of tetanus are quite ubiquitous. They are most always present in the soil of barnyards and gardens and, since they are blown about in the dust, may also be found on the street and the playground. The germs have also been found in the house, in food, and even on the skin—which points up the ease with which they may

be carried into a wound.

Jaws Locked
The most common symptom of the disease is a painful spasm of the jaw muscles. Opening of the mouth soon becomes an impossibility and it is from this peculiarity of the disorder that the popular name of "lockjaw" is derived. Later, the throat muscles become fixed and the process gradually includes the muscles of the arms, legs, trunk, and chest.

Protection against tetanus is given in two different ways. The safest procedure is immunization with tetanus toxoid. This requires two or three injections of the toxoid followed by another dose a year later.

In cases of injury where the wound might be infected with the tetanus germs, a booster dose of tetanus toxoid is given in order to provide rapid protection. However, the toxoid is useless at such times unless the individual has received the previous injections needed to insure an active immunity.

Should the illness develop in an individual protected with tetanus toxoid and who fails to receive the booster dose of toxoid or the antitoxin, chances are that it would not be severe if the injury occurred within five years from the time of the last dose of the toxoid.

The other preventive is tetanus antitoxin serum which is administered at the time of injury, and which supposedly gives a temporary protection that lasts for several weeks. There is always the possibility, however, that the antitoxin may not be given in time or may not, for some reason or other, be available when needed. There are also some individuals who are allergic to horse serum (the antitoxin is obtained from horses previously inoculated with graduated doses of tetanus toxin), and its administration could be as dangerous as the disease itself.

Tetanus is so often fatal that adults and children, particularly youngsters of school age, should be protected against it, and tetanus toxoid is the only safe and sure preventive. Since the odds against recovery from the disease are so unfavorable and the chances of injury so great, an ounce of prevention in the case of tetanus is certainly worth many a pound of cure.

Hollypark Opens for Fall Meet

Assured of luring nearly all of the nation's leading trotters, pacers and drivers, western Harness Racing Association officials today were enthusiastically looking forward to the banner opening of their fall meeting tomorrow at Hollywood Park.

The final half of the 1955 WHRA season will run for 36 days, through Saturday, Nov. 26, and every indication clearly points to the finest meeting ever staged by the local Standardbred organization.

Chief drawing card for the many outstanding racers and drivers who will be on hand is the \$700,000 which will be offered by the WHRA in stakes and overnight purses. This is an all-time high for meetings up to 36 days.

Topping the stakes program will be the two \$75,000 American Classics, one each for trotters and pacers. Eligibility to the two features is by invitation only and such an offer is made only to the winners of the nation's leading trotting and pacing fixtures.

Burglar Takes Cash

A burglar entered the home of Donald Enlaw, 3128 W. 187th Pl., Saturday night and took \$17 from a purse, the victim told police officials.

Reports indicate the intruder entered through an open window.

EL CAMINOTES

By Margie Lane

Late enrollment peaked over the predicted 6500 mark here at this ever growing educational community last week, but students seemed too interested in their activities to notice.

Jim Donnette and Pat Rogan, both from Torrance, and recently selected yell leaders for ECC can be seen going about the business of making up new routines and deciding upon costumes. Jim, head yell leader, and Pat, were previously active in high school. Both were yell leaders for the Tartars.

Running for Posts
Campaign posters are noticed

in various spots on the campus for Torrance seeking officeholders Dee Gibson, Jane Blackman and Joan Laskaris who are vying for the posts of freshmen veep, secretary and treasurer, respectively. Election results will tell the story.

The AWS, Associated Women Students, threw out its welcome mats and opened doors to about 400 women students at their annual fall tea last Thursday. The guests, some of whom were Torranceettes Berta Stewart, Jean Northy, Diane Larson and Joy Pearman, enjoyed a fashion show, entertainment, refreshments, and a few words on the campus sororities and clubs.

Warriors present at the student assembly last Thursday were entertained by that popular Mercury recording group "The Penguins." The rhythmic quartet sang, among other songs, their first nation-wide hit, "Earth Angel."

Sports Bit
Last Friday night a considerable portion of Warriortown toured to LA City College to watch an uncomfortable four quarters, which ended in a 14-1 tie. The competent Camino eleven, which is used to being on the heavy end of the score, might decide to reassure their status by making hamburger of the next team they face.

Camino will be able to present to its spectators quite an elaborate halftime show this football season. Besides the exchange yells and songs with the opposing side, are the card stunts, spirited band, the Indian rituals by a "chief" and his "squaws," a hand picked group of high stepping majorettes, and, if the students approve it, three ambitious flag girls with a very effective routine.

Jennine Rogers, an experienced flag girl and former amateur skating champ from Torrance, is with the latter group.

SAFER MINING
Bituminous coal mining in the United States is safe as it was back in 1910, considering hours worked, volume of production and other economic factors.

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TORRANCE HERALD

Five

Plan 'Sacket' League Here

Sacket, a new game similar to softball but having some characteristics of cricket, will be introduced to sports fans by the recreation department on Oct. 12 in the new National Guard Armory.

Recreation and National Guard officials hope to form a league for indoor winter play, if response to the game merits such action. Members of the Torrance Lions Club and the local NG unit will demonstrate the new game at the special meeting, which starts at 7:30 p.m.

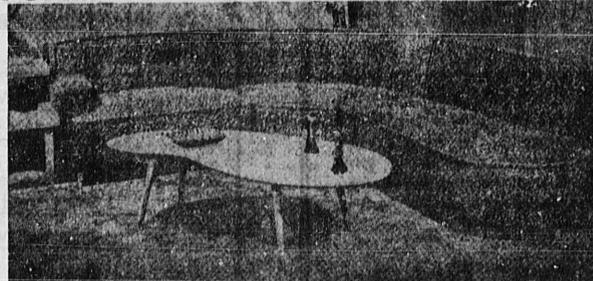
Representatives of local clubs, plants or organizations are asked to be on hand in case they want to sponsor an entry in the league.

Elmer Moon, city athletic director, said participation in the proposed league would entail little or no cost to the sponsoring groups.

Thief Takes Mower
Mrs. Robert Gage, 17326 Glenburn Ave., reported to police today the theft of a lawnmower from a garage during the night. The mower is valued at \$25 she said.

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